

Resources on Natural Disasters and Domestic Violence

Technical Assistance Guidance

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Impact of Natural Disasters on Domestic Violence

1. [Understanding the Impact of Hurricane Harvey on Family Violence Survivors and Those Who Serve Them](#) - 2019, Texas Council on Family Violence
2. [Empower Clients to Address the Mental Health Impacts of Climate Change](#) - August 2020, American Counseling Association
3. [Domestic Violence and Disasters](#) - State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families

What should programs expect following a disaster?

1. Impact on Survivors
 - a. Survivors and their children are more vulnerable to violence due to competition for limited resources and infrastructure and the overall need for survival.



- b. Families affected by interpersonal violence face additional trauma due to forced displacement and exposure to adverse effects (e.g. flooding, mass destruction).
 - c. DV survivors often suffer from re-traumatization or re-victimization following a disaster. Many issues faced post-disaster are similar to leaving a DV relationship such as decrease in wages, loss of support systems, reduced transportation, and lost childcare. (For example, two-thirds of New Orleans childcare was lost for two years post-Hurricane Katrina.)
 - d. Some survivors may be forced to flee and evacuate to the same shelters as perpetrators.
 - e. Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, family violence organizations reported increases in new clients with the need for housing more than doubling.
 - f. Following natural disasters, FEMA may be able to provide housing vouchers for hotel stays during home reconstruction. However, survivors and their advocates should be aware that this process may last several months.
2. Impact on DV Programs and Shelters
- a. Staff of domestic violence programs and their survivors may be facing the same needs such as housing, transportation, immigration, adjustment of insurance claims, and community outreach.
 - b. Staff may report burnout and trauma following a community disaster.
 - c. Organizational infrastructure may also be damaged that limits their ability to perform services for survivors.
 - d. There may be an increased need for protection orders but depending on courthouse and law enforcement operations, some operations may change as a result of natural disaster damage. Programs and advocates must be in contact with judiciary officials and be up-to-date on legal procedures.

Impact of Community Trauma on Families

1. [Child Reactions to Trauma](#) - UC Davis Children's Hospital
1. [Disaster and Trauma Responses of Children](#) - American Counseling Association
2. [Disaster and Trauma Effects on Parents](#) - American Counseling Association

Impact of Trauma on Children

1. Children's well-being may be affected negatively by being displaced from their home and/or neighborhood and delayed reunification with parents. Children to young adults may display the following behavioral changes:
 - a. Physical reactions or changes such as: anxiety, sleep issues, body aches (e.g. headaches, stomach aches), temporary regressive verbal and/or motor functioning



- b. Mental and emotional reactions such as: increased withdrawal, cognitive confusion, fear of separation (and clinging to caregivers)
2. Resource for Children - This is a social story for the caregivers on Maui to use with young children to support their emotional wellbeing.
 - a. [There Was a Fire PDF](#) by Liz Harline (Early Childhood at Honolulu Community College)
 - b. [There Was a Fire \(editable PPT\)](#)

How to Respond to Children's Trauma

1. Limit media and news exposure of the event to avoid retraumatization.
2. Do not punish children for regressive behavior (e.g. bedwetting) or decrease in academic performance.
3. Be understanding and let children grieve and mourn recent changes and events.
 - a. Provide opportunities to talk about their trauma but be careful to not make them feel pressured to speak.
4. Create routines (chores, bedtime, play time, etc.) that are similar to pre-trauma routines.
5. Involve children in chores that make them feel they are helping to restore the community.
6. Recognize and praise children's accomplishments.
7. Talk to school officials about possible behavior changes and appropriate responses and reasonable accommodations to academics (e.g. test taking, tutors).

Impact of Trauma on Parents & Caregivers

1. Parent and caregiver well-being may be affected negatively by being displaced from their home and/or neighborhood, the threat to their own and/or children's lives, and proximity or duration to the traumatic event. Trauma in parents and other caregivers may be displayed in the following ways:
 - c. Physical reactions or changes such as: overeating or under-eating, sleep issues, heightened startle responses
 - d. Mental and emotional reactions such as: depression, mood swings, short-term memory issues, withdrawal

How to Respond to Parental Trauma

1. Prepare and eat balanced meals and stay active/move around to not remain idle.
2. Maintain close-to-normal routines around chores.
3. Talk to other adults who experienced similar trauma or seek professional counseling.



Resources Related to Disasters and Impact on Mental Health

1. [Coping with Shelter-in-Place Emergencies](#) - 2010, American National Red Cross
2. [Post-Traumatic Disaster Stress Fact Sheet](#) - American Counseling Association
3. [Disaster Impact and Recovery Model](#) - American Counseling Association
4. [Vicarious Trauma Fact Sheet](#) - American Counseling Association
5. [Debriefing with Survivors of Disasters](#) - American Counseling Association
6. [Helping Survivors with Stress Management Skills](#) - American Counseling Association
7. [Intrusive Memories](#) - American Counseling Association
8. [1:1 Crisis Counseling](#) - American Counseling Association
9. [Contributing Factors to Secondary Traumatic Stress](#) - American Counseling Association
10. [Climate in Crisis: Counselors needed](#) - August 2020, Counseling Today
11. [Doing the groundwork after a large-scale traumatic event](#) - June 2019, Counseling Today

How to Support Staff After Community Trauma

1. [Tipsheet for Supporting Staff After Community Trauma](#) - January 2023, National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health
2. [Six Supportive Ways to Address Trauma that Shows Up at Work](#) - 2020, Workplaces Respond to Domestic & Sexual Violence
3. [Supporting Employees After Violence Against Their Community](#) - October 2022, Harvard Business Review

Post-Traumatic Event Tips for Program Leadership

1. Professionals working to support survivors are also not immune to trauma and developing mental health symptoms. First responders, counselors, and other service providers are likely to experience compassion fatigue and burnout. Programs should prioritize self-care to minimize these issues.
2. Be flexible and responsive to accommodate needs for healing and expression of grief, including time off from work.
 - a. Set expectations appropriate to capacity and available resources.
3. If possible, encourage staff to reduce media or news consumption of the event, which can be retraumatizing.
4. Determine what wellness strategies are used by your organization.
 - a. Are there shared wellness tools or space available for use?
 - b. Encourage a culture of wellness within your organization.



- c. Take a moment to recognize and celebrate staff achievements.
5. Leaders should be prepared to discuss post-event reflections with teams shortly after the conclusion of an event, if possible. (Read more about how to debrief with staff [here](#).)
 - a. Depending on the type of event, determine if this reflection should be individual or as a group?
 - b. What are your affected staff members' thoughts or feelings about the event?
6. Practice compassionate leadership (i.e. empathy + action)
 - a. Supporting staff well-being, cultural responsiveness, resiliency, and ethical practices reduces staff turnover.
 - b. How to practice compassion in the workplace (See [Roffey Park's Model](#))
 - i. Be alive to the suffering of others. - Be sensitive to the well-being of others and pay attention to changes in behavior.
 - ii. Be non-judgmental. - Accept and validate the person's experiences.
 - iii. Tolerate personal distress - Practice the ability to hold difficult emotions.
 - iv. Be empathic. - Understand the other person's pain.
 - v. Take appropriate action. - Customize actions based on individual circumstances.
7. Discuss with your team or organization the following questions:
 - a. What would be helpful next and how do we meet staff needs?
 - i. How do we help staff with immediate and possible long-term needs?
 - ii. Should we seek external training and technical assistance?
 - iii. What employee assistance plans are available?
 - b. How should we respond if a similar event occurs again?
 - i. What worked? What didn't work?

How/Where do I ...?

Register for emergency alerts in my state and/or county?

1. National Weather Service (Nationwide)
 - a. [Hawai'i Alerts](#)
2. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
[NOAA Weather Radio](#)
3. The Weather Channel (Nationwide)
 - a. [Mobile App](#)
4. City & County of Honolulu (Island of O'ahu)
 - a. [Honolulu Department of Emergency Management](#)
 - b. [HNL Info Alerts](#)
5. Hawai'i County (Island of Hawai'i)



- a. [Hawai'i County Civil Defense Alerts](#)
- b. [Hawai'i County Emergency Notification System](#)
6. Maui County (Islands of Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i)
 - a. [Maui Emergency Notification System](#)
 - b. [Maka'ala Emergency Alerts](#)
7. Kaua'i County (Islands of Kaua'i, Ni'ihau)
 - a. [Kaua'i County Emergency Notification System](#)

Get information on natural disaster preparedness?

1. [Central Pacific Hurricane Center](#)
 - a. Statewide organization, based in Honolulu
2. [HI-EMA City & County of Honolulu Hurricane Guidance](#)
 - a. [Multilingual Disaster Preparedness Resources](#) (Available in Traditional & Simplified Chinese, Chuukese, Ilokano, Japanese, Korean, Marshallese, Tagalog, Vietnamese)
3. [Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards](#) (University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program)
 - a. Last Updated: June 2018
4. [How to Prepare for a Hurricane](#) (FEMA)
5. [Office of Public Health Preparedness](#) (Hawai'i Department of Health)
6. [National Hurricane Center](#) (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration)
7. [Hurricane Preparedness](#) and [Returning Home After a Hurricane or Flood](#) (Red Cross)
8. Hurricane Safety Checklists ([English](#), [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#), [Haitian](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Urdu](#), [Vietnamese](#))

File for federal disaster relief?

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - a. [Help After a Disaster](#) (available in 25 languages)
 - b. Apply for FEMA disaster assistance [here](#).
 - i. Those with businesses may also file [loans with the Small Business Association](#) (SBA) but must register with FEMA first.
2. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
 - a. [Immigration Relief in Emergencies or Unforeseen Circumstances](#)

File for unemployment benefits?

1. Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
 - a. File a claim [here](#) or call (808) 984-8400.



File a claim with homeowner/renter insurance?

1. [My insurance doesn't cover what?](#) (Hawai'i Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs)

Replace my ID or driver's license?

1. City & County of Honolulu
 - a. [Department of Customer Services](#)
2. County of Hawai'i
 - a. [Vehicle Registration & Licensing Division](#)
3. Maui County
 - a. [Division of Motor Vehicles & Licensing](#)
4. Kaua'i County
 - a. [Department of Motor Vehicles](#)

Replace my social security card?

1. Social Security Administration
 - a. Request a free replacement [here](#).

Replace my Medicare card?

1. [Medicare.gov](#)
 - a. [Log in or create a Medicare account](#) to print an official copy.

Replace important immigration documents?

1. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
 - a. [Contact Center](#) - for general immigration document replacements
 - b. [I-90 Green Card Replacement](#)
 - c. [I-94 Arrival/Departure Record Replacement](#)
 - i. Also available through Customs and Border Protection [here](#).
 - ii. CBP no longer has a 5-year access limit; CBP is adding all I-94 documents, including pre-electronic. However, CBP will need the passport number and it is recommended to contact consular offices to receive that number first.
 - d. [I-102 Nonimmigrant Arrival/Departure Replacement](#)
 - e. [I-765 Employment Authorization Replacement](#)
2. [Maui Immigration Law, LLC](#)
 - a. Call (808) 244-5858 to replace DACA or green cards.